READER NOTE: The October, November and December editions of the regional *Workforce Observations* will be the last editions to be printed in hardcopy and mailed by the Department of Workforce Development. Future editions will be placed on our website at **http://www.dwd.state.wi.us/lmi/wda/ wo_pubs.htm** as they are currently posted here. One may sign up for monthly notification of publication updates via e-mail from this webpage. Please contact your local labor market analyst/economist if you have any questions.

October Rates Decline, More Employed

The **Milwaukee County** unemployment rate dropped to 6.6 percent in October; an improvement of five-tenths of a percentage point. Five thousand more residents were employed and 2,400 fewer were unemployed over the month. The unemployment rate is unchanged from October 2002.

Washington County's unemployment in October was 4.2 percent. The rate was lower than the month-ago figure by two-tenths of a percentage point. Washington County also showed the largest annual decline of the Milwaukee metro counties dropping five-tenths of a point compared to last October.

Ozaukee County's unemployment rate decreased four-tenths of a percentage point to 4.0 percent in October. It was the only metropolitan county to show an annual rise in unemployment compared to last October; three-tenths of a percentage point.
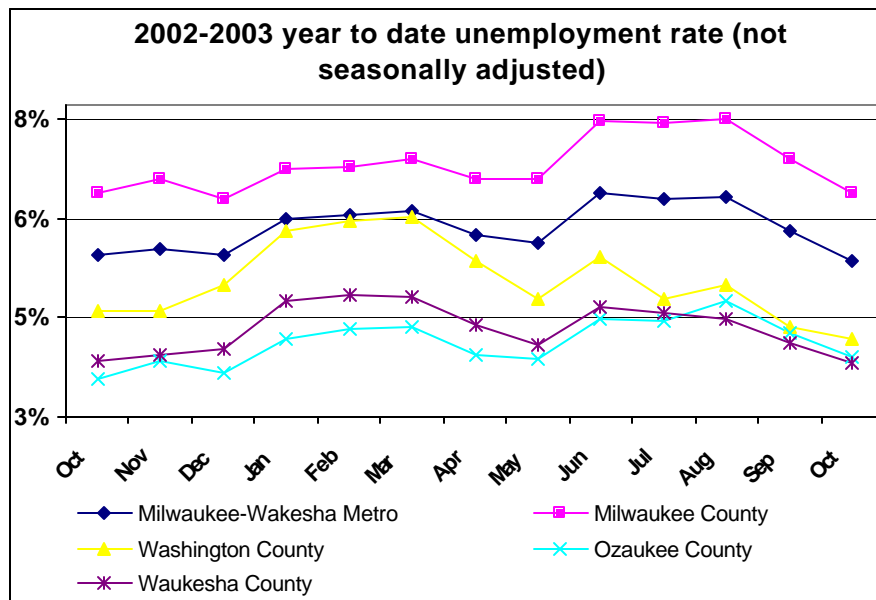
The lowest unemployment rate in the metro area in October belonged to **Waukesha County** at 3.9 percent. It is three-tenths of a point lower than September's and is unchanged compared to October 2002.

The **Milwaukee-Waukesha MSA** unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted) was 5.5 percent in October. It shows a decrease of four-tenths of a percent point, which is a significant drop for this time of year and is certainly welcome in a year that has shown an extremely stubborn labor market. The rate dropped for the right reason—many more residents

were employed and fewer were unemployed. This may seem fairly obvious, but it is the optimal reason because the unemployment rate can also decrease due to unemployed residents leaving the labor market altogether out of discouragement. The metro rate is lower than last October's (-0.1 percentage point) and is the first month since April to show such an annual decrease.

Industry Employment figures in the **Milwaukee-Waukesha MSA** show 13,100 more jobs since September or about 1.6 percent more jobs. This preliminary figure was Milwaukee metro's largest one month job gain for the month of October. October's increase compensated for the unusually large loss of jobs between August and September and most likely reflected hiring that occurred in September but was not documented in September's industry employment survey due to the survey timing. This does not diminish the fact that the Milwaukee area showed as solid a month as it has seen in some time from the industry aspect. Retail trade, education and health services, professional and business services all showed larger than usual monthly employment gains in October.

Annually, the Milwaukee area continues to show an industry employment deficit. Manufacturing and temporary agency employment show the largest annual employment losses. Government employment, for its large monthly gain, shows almost 4,000 fewer employees than at this time last year. Retail trade's deficit is also significant. Education and health services and financial activities employment show nice increases. Information employment showed a 700-job gain since October 2002.

2002-2003 year to date unemployment rate (not seasonally adjusted)

Legend:
- Milwaukee-Wakesha Metro
- Milwaukee County
- Washington County
- Ozaukee County
- Waukesha County

October 2003	Wisconsin	Milwaukee-Waukesha MSA	Milwaukee County/WDA	Washington County	Ozaukee County	Waukesha County	W-O-W WDA
*Civilian Labor Force**	3,094,186	821,570	487,000	69,503	48,970	216,098	334,571
Persons Employed	2,953,354	776,316	454,962	66,552	47,030	207,772	321,354
Persons Unemployed	140,832	45,254	32,038	2,951	1,940	8,326	13,217
Unemployment Rate	4.6%	5.5%	6.6%	4.2%	4.0%	3.9%	4.0%
Total jobs of all non-farm industries (Thousands)**	2,811.2	836.2	531.9	47.4	37.5	219.3	304.2
Goods Producing Jobs	637.1	170.7	81.9	16.2	11.6	61.0	88.8
Service Producing Jobs	2,174.1	665.5	450.0	31.3	25.9	158.2	211.3
Construction, Mining and Natural Resources	127.6	34.7	13.6	3.1	1.6	16.5	20.9
All Manufacturing	509.5	136.0	68.3	13.1	10.0	44.6	68.0
Total Trade	441.7	120.9	66.3	7.3	5.4	41.9	53.5
Wholesale Trade	119.0	40.2	20.3	2.0	1.4	16.5	20.0
Retail Trade	322.7	80.7	46.0	5.2	3.9	25.6	33.7
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	106.3	29.7	22.1	1.5	0.4	5.6	7.5
Financial Activities	158.4	59.6	41.3	2.0	2.1	14.3	18.3
Education and Health Services	372.9	133.2	97.9	5.5	4.6	25.3	34.5
Leisure & Hospitality	241.3	63.0	40.4	4.4	3.1	15.1	23.2
Information, Professional and Business Services, Other Services	435.3	164.7	114.8	5.4	6.0	38.5	49.2
Information	50.1	19.9	13.7	0.5	0.3	5.4	6.1
Professional and Business Services	247.2	103.2	74.5	2.3	3.8	22.6	28.4
Other Services	138.0	41.6	26.7	2.6	1.9	10.4	14.8
All Government	418.2	94.4	67.3	5.1	4.3	17.7	25.1
Change from September 2003							
*Civilian Labor Force**	5,390	5,140	2,580	620	340	1,600	2,560
Persons Employed	15,550	8,530	5,000	730	520	2,280	3,530
Persons Unemployed	-10,160	-3,380	-2,410	-110	-170	-680	-970
Unemployment Rate	-0.3%	-0.4%	-0.5%	-0.2%	-0.4%	-0.3%	-0.3%
Total jobs of all non-farm industries (Thousands)**	20.2	13.1	9.2	0.6	0.5	2.9	4.0
Goods Producing Jobs	-5.8	-0.4	-0.2	0.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.2
Service Producing Jobs	26.0	13.5	9.4	0.6	0.5	3.0	4.1
Construction, Mining and Natural Resources	-0.8	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2
All Manufacturing	-5.0	-0.7	-0.4	-0.1	-0.1	-0.2	-0.3
Total Trade	5.1	2.4	1.4	0.1	0.1	0.8	1.1
Wholesale Trade	0.4	-0.1	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Retail Trade	4.7	2.5	1.4	0.2	0.1	0.8	1.1
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	0.7	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Financial Activities	-0.2	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1
Education and Health Services	5.5	3.0	2.2	0.1	0.1	0.6	0.8
Leisure & Hospitality	-7.6	-1.6	-1.0	-0.1	-0.1	-0.4	-0.6
Information, Professional and Business Services, Other Services	0.3	2.2	1.5	0.1	0.1	0.5	0.7
Information	-0.3	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2
Professional and Business Services	-0.8	1.2	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.3
Other Services	1.4	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2
All Government	22.2	7.1	5.1	0.4	0.3	1.3	2.0
Change from October 2002							
*Civilian Labor Force**	77,930	11,760	7,020	710	900	3,140	4,740
Persons Employed	75,930	11,540	6,760	990	700	3,090	4,780
Persons Unemployed	2,000	220	260	-280	200	50	-40
Unemployment Rate	-0.1%	-0.1%	0.0%	-0.5%	0.3%	0.0%	-0.1%
Total jobs of all non-farm industries (Thousands)**	3.5	-9.8	-5.1	-0.9	-0.7	-3.2	-4.8
Goods Producing Jobs	-24.7	-7.1	-3.5	-0.7	-0.5	-2.4	-3.6
Service Producing Jobs	28.2	-2.7	-1.6	-0.2	-0.2	-0.8	-1.2
Construction, Mining and Natural Resources	-6.7	-0.5	-0.2	0.0	0.0	-0.2	-0.3
All Manufacturing	-17.9	-6.6	-3.3	-0.6	-0.5	-2.2	-3.3
Total Trade	10.1	-1.9	-1.1	-0.1	-0.1	-0.7	-0.9
Wholesale Trade	4.3	-0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Retail Trade	5.8	-1.8	-1.0	-0.1	-0.1	-0.6	-0.8
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	-0.1	-0.9	-0.7	0.0	0.0	-0.2	-0.2
Financial Activities	4.8	1.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.3
Education and Health Services	12.0	5.1	3.8	0.2	0.2	1.0	1.4
Leisure & Hospitality	3.6	-0.9	-0.6	-0.1	0.0	-0.2	-0.3
Information, Professional and Business Services, Other Services	5.7	-1.3	-1.0	0.0	-0.1	-0.2	-0.3
Information	-0.1	0.7	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.2
Professional and Business Services	2.4	-2.4	-1.8	-0.1	-0.1	-0.5	-0.7
Other Services	3.5	0.5	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2
All Government	-8.0	-3.8	-2.7	-0.2	-0.2	-0.7	-1.1

* Labor force figures are **not** seasonally adjusted and are commonly revised. Figures from "place of residence" survey from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Local Area Unemployment Statistics program. **Figures based upon "place of employment" survey from the BLS, Non-Farm Wage and Salary estimates.
Month and year ago change figures are rounded and may not sum to total